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Source: *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, Dec., 1937, Vol. 71, No. 417 (Dec., 1937), pp. 249-251+254-257+260-261

Published by: (PUB) Burlington Magazine Publications Ltd.

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BYZANTINE IKONS OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

BY VICTOR LASAREFF

REALLY good ancient Byzantine ikons are extremely rare. Paradoxical as it may sound, Byzantine ikon-painting can be studied nowhere so well as at Leningrad and Moscow, for it is only in these cities that any considerable number of first-class examples are found from which clumsy repaints have been removed so that, in many instances, they appear in all their original beauty. It is deeply to be regretted that most of the ikons preserved in the Athens Museum and in the churches of Greece and Constantinople are so encrusted with dirt and have been so completely repainted that they have lost practically all their artistic value. Moreover, most of them belong to the Italo-Byzantine and Cretan schools of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when Byzantine ikon-painting had already, strictly speaking, come to an end. It is these late Italo-Greek and Cretan ikons which are usually offered by art-dealers as "old Byzantine ikons," and they give an entirely false impression of the golden age of Byzantine art. For these reasons every newly-discovered, authentic example of Byzantine, i.e., purely Greek, ikon-painting is of the greatest interest, especially those which throw light on the school of Constantinople—the chief centre of all Byzantine culture.

In the fourteenth century ikon-painting held a very important position in Byzantium. During the Comnenian period art was predominantly monumental, but in the time of the Palæologi the emphasis was transferred to easel-pictures. Frescoes in churches acquired a much more intimate quality which was expressed by a decrease in size and by a more and more frequent use of a decorative system in which the surfaces were divided into separate scenes, resembling a series of ikons arranged in rows one above another (as at Mistra). As its development brought it nearer in type to an illusionist picture, the ikon became, in its most brilliant form, an embodiment of the anti-monumental tendencies of Byzantine art in the fourteenth century. In ikons, as well as in frescoes and miniatures, everything from that time onwards acquires movement. The garments float, gestures become more and more lively, the attitudes are freer, and the architectural masses are piled up dynamically in tiers; curved lines prevail in the architectural coulisses and the velum, with its restless convolutions, is employed with constantly increasing frequency. Human figures and architectural- and landscape-backgrounds are fused into a single whole to which the greater accuracy of relative scale contributes not a little. The features become smaller and the grim faces soften. Religious

scenes frequently approximate pure genre and are permeated by a spirit of intimacy and much warmth of feeling. The colouring also changes, becoming softer, more tender, more delicate. Light blues and a greenish yellow are most frequently employed, and although the general colour-scheme grows lighter, it gains in tonal unity. In brief, a freer, more picturesque style develops, showing many humanist tendencies. It would, however, be a fundamental error to regard this style of the period of the Palæologi as realistic; its basic principle remains that of a pure transcendentalism. It is still moulded by the formulas of a strictly defined iconography; the figures still lack weight and substance; modelling is still suggested by colour rather than by chiaroscuro; the architecture still suggests fantastically decorative stage-scenery; interiors which would bring the figures into a real and tangible environment are still lacking. Byzantium always remains true to itself even in this final stage.

It is generally assumed that the period of rapid economic decline upon which Byzantium entered in the fourteenth century made it impossible for the artists of that time to use the costly technique of mosaic. This is only partially true. We do not, indeed, find any large mosaic *ensembles* in the Byzantium of the Palæologi (Kahrié Djami is an exception), but it is certain that the production of small mosaic ikons was continued into the fourteenth century. Constantinople remained the centre for all such work, and to the artificers connected with the court I attribute a number of mosaic ikons forming a clearly defined stylistic group, usually ascribed to an earlier period.

Among the ikons of this group the first to be mentioned are the two charming companion-mosaics in the Museo dell'Opera at Florence.¹ The *Twelve Feasts* there represented are executed in the

¹ UVAROV: *Collection of Minor Works*, Moscow [1910], pp. 42-43 (in Russian); LIKHACHEV: *Materials for the History of Russian Ikon Painting*, Pl. IV, I (in Russian); DALTON: *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, p. 432; MILLET: *Iconographie de l'Evangile*, Index s.v. Florence, Opera del Duomo, pp. 750-760; AINALOV: *Byzantine Painting in the Fourteenth Century*, pp. 72-78 (in Russian); WULFF-ALPATOV: *Denkmäler der Ikonenmalerei*, pp. 110-114, 270; DIEHL: *Manuel d'art byzantin*, pp. 563-565. The mosaics were given to the church of S. Giovanni in 1394 by a Venetian lady, Nicoletta da Grioni, the widow of a *kubicolari* of the Emperor of Byzantium, John Cantacuzenus, who was dethroned in 1354. This proves their Constantinopolitan origin. Ainalov cites a number of convincing analogies with the mosaics of Kahrié Djami, but his efforts to throw light on the traces of western influence can hardly be considered successful. For the *Nativity of Christ*, cf. the analogous composition in Kahrié Djami; for the figure of the Virgin in the *Annunciation*, cf. that of Mary in the *Numbering* in the same place; for the treatment of Simon's garments in the *Presentation in the Temple*, cf. the figure of the woman with her back turned to the spectator in the *Massacre of the Innocents*, also in the same place. The Florentine mosaic ikons were executed in the first quarter of the fourteenth century.

same free, picturesque style, full of vigorous movement, as the mosaics of Kahrié Djami with which they have a very close stylistic affinity. Notwithstanding their small size, the spacial composition of each scene is unusually clear. The same characteristic is apparent in the fine *Annunciation* in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the composition of which repeats that of the analogous ikon at Florence.² Single figures are represented in mosaic ikons, such as that of *St. John Chrysostom* in the former Nelidov collection in Paris,³; *St. Theodore Stratilates* in the Hermitage⁴ [PLATE I, c]; the *Pantokrator* at Galatina⁵; the *Pantokrator* in the church of Peter and Paul at Chimay⁶; *St. George* in the Louvre⁷ [PLATE I, a]; and the *Hodegetria* in Sta Maria della Salute at Venice.⁸ All these figures have a fragility

² DARCEL : *Gazette des Beaux Arts* [1859], I, pp. 157, 161-162; BAYET : *L'Art byzantin*, Fig. 44; DALTON : *op. cit.*, p. 432; *Id.*, *East Christian Art*, p. 265; AINALOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79; WULFF-ALPATOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 108-110, 269-270; DIEHL : *op. cit.*, p. 870; TALBOT RICE : *Apollo* [1933], XVIII, p. 266. This ikon originated in the same workshop as the two mosaic ikons at Florence.

³ AINALOV : *Vizantyeski Vremennik* [1899], pp. 75-8; KONDAKOV : *Monuments of Christian Art on Mt. Athos*, pp. 116-117 (both in Russian); MUÑOZ : *L'Art byzantin à l'exposition de Grottaferrata*, p. 170 and Pl. III; DALTON : *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, p. 434; WULFF-ALPATOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62, 261; DIEHL : *op. cit.*, p. 566; TALBOT RICE : *loc. cit.*, p. 267. From Vatopedi. Though usually attributed to the twelfth century, this ikon did not, in fact, originate before the fourteenth century. In the monuments of the eleventh and twelfth centuries (e.g., Cod. Paris. gr. 550, the mosaics of Sta Sofia at Kiev, the Cappella Palatina and Cefalù) the type of St. John Chrysostom is incomparably more austere. It is not only the small features and soft expression which indicate the fourteenth century, but also such a detail as the asymmetric pearlike shape of the head (cf. the half-length figure of St. Chrysostom in the fourteenth-century ikon of *Our Lady of Tenderness* in the Hermitage).

⁴ DARCEL : *La collection Basileusky*, Paris [1874], p. 25; SCHLUMBERGER : *L'Épopée byzantine*, I, Fig. on p. 309; DALTON : *op. cit.*, p. 433; DIEHL : *op. cit.*, p. 565. Diehl, Dalton and Darcel do not date this ikon; Schlumberger refers it quite arbitrarily to the tenth or eleventh century. For the type of the face, cf. the wall-painting at Petch (PETKOVIC : *La peinture serbe du Moyen Age*, Pl. 67b).

⁵ CASTELFRANCO : *Bollettino d'arte* [1927], pp. 289-293; LASAREFF : *THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE* [1931], LIX, p. 159. The type of Christ strongly resembles the *Pantokrator* in the dome of Kahrié Djami and it is not impossible that the ikon originated at the very end of the thirteenth century.

⁶ WEALE and MAES : *Instrumenta ecclesiastica. Choix d'objets d'arts, etc., exposés à Malines* [1864], Pl. IV, No. 54; DALTON : *op. cit.*, p. 432. A gift of Pope Sixtus IV. The ikon originated early in the fourteenth century and has suffered greatly from the passage of time. This dating is confirmed by the resemblance of the type of Christ with that of the dome mosaics in Kahrié Djami and Fétéy Djami representing the *Pantokrator*.

⁷ COURAJOD : *Gazette des Beaux Arts* [1883], XXVIII, pp. 205-206; COURAJOD and MOLINIER : *Donation du Baron Davillier*, Paris [1885], No. 274; MÜNTZ : *Bulletin Monumentale* [1886], Pl. X, p. 225; SCHLUMBERGER : *Nicéphore Phocas*, p. 415; DALTON : *op. cit.*, p. 432; DIEHL : *op. cit.*, p. 565. It was purchased at Florence. Dalton and Diehl date this ikon in the thirteenth century which seems to me too early. It was more probably made at the beginning of the fourteenth century. For the type of the horse, see the mosaics of Kahrié Djami (the *Magi before Herod* and the fragment of the *Flight into Egypt*).

⁸ DURAND : *Annales Archéologiques*, XXI, p. 102; DALTON : *op. cit.*, p. 432; LORENZETTI : *Venezia e il suo estuario*, p. 502; TALBOT RICE : *loc. cit.*, pp. 265-66. On the back there is a later and no doubt apocryphal inscription attributing the ikon to a certain Theodosius as having made it in 1115. The inscription also states that the ikon was presented to the Emperor Manuel I (1143-1180) and had been preserved in Sta Sophia. The nobleman Matteo Bon gave the ikon to the church of Sta Maria della Salute in the seventeenth century. The evidence of the inscription, unusual in Byzantine monuments, is contradicted by the style of

and elegance typical of the fourteenth century; the features are small and delicate and the expression has completely lost its former austerity, which is replaced by a peculiarly soft and moving quality. The mosaic workshops of the metropolis, from which all these remarkably fine pieces issued, apparently ceased their activities in the second half of the fourteenth century, for we do not find a single first-class mosaic ikon of a later date.⁹

The beautiful ikon of the *Twelve Apostles* in the Museum of Fine Arts at Moscow stands pre-eminent among the painted ikons of the Constantinople school belonging to the first half of the fourteenth century¹⁰ [PLATE II, A]. The Apostles are represented as standing naturally and easily in strong contrast with the rigid, vertical lines of the twelfth century. Their heads incline in different directions and a similar antithesis appears in the arrangement of the figures, while the freely falling garments break into small, sharp folds. The result is a restless and dynamic rhythm. The colour-scheme is based on a combination of deep blue, yellowish green (green-gage), light and dark greens and lilac enlivened by bluish-white lights and contrasting effectively with the gold. The modelling of the faces is achieved by means of fine white lines laid on in short strokes with a full brush. This is the same method used in the frescoes of Kahrié Djami and appears later, in a somewhat exaggerated form, in the Novgorod frescoes of Theophanes the Greek. It is used also in two ikons of the *Death of the Virgin*, one in the Hermitage [PLATE I, D] and the other in the Museum of Fine Arts at Moscow [PLATE III, D],¹¹ which are similar in style, as well as in ikons of the *Virgin and Child* [PLATE I, B]¹² and of the *Annunciation* [PLATE the ikon which indicates the fourteenth century as the time of its execution.

⁹ I failed to find the mosaic ikon in the Palazzo Borghese at Rome representing the *Madonna with the Apostles* and attributed by BARBIER DE MONTAULT (*Revue de l'art chrétien* [1874], XVIII, p. 152) and DALTON (*op. cit.*, p. 432) to the fourteenth century. All the other mosaic ikons of the fourteenth century which have come down to us are second rate provincial work and cannot be dated earlier than the second half of this century: *Our Lady of Tenderness* in the Athens Museum (from Asia Minor, cf. SOTIRIU : *Φιλικη Εταιρεία* [1925], No. 5); *Christ and the standing Hodegetria* in the Basilica of Panagia i Porta in Thessaly (KONDAKOV : *The Iconography of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 33-34 and Fig. 50, in Russian); *St. John the Apostle* in the Lavra Monastery on Mt. Athos (KONDAKOV : *Monuments of Christian Art on Mt. Athos*, pp. 114-116 and Pl. XXXIV, in Russian). Kondakov refers this ikon to the twelfth or thirteenth century, but this dating does not accord with its style or with the type of John's face. For the latter, cf. the head of the seated St. John in Cod. Mosq. gr. 407.

¹⁰ MURATOV : *History of Ancient Russian Painting*, p. 186; AINALOV : *Byzantine Painting of the Fourteenth Century*, pp. 121-4 (both in Russian); WULFF-ALPATOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 114-116, 270; MOURATOFF : *La Peinture byzantine*, p. 127 and Pl. CLXXII (incorrectly attributed to the twelfth century). For the treatment of the garments cf. the mosaics of Kahrié Djami (the Apostles Peter and Paul and the group of the Apostles in the scene depicting *Christ Healing the Sick*). For the treatment of the faces, cf. the frescoes in the refectory of the same mosque (especially the head of an unidentified bearded saint).

¹¹ MURATOV : *History of Ancient Russian Painting*, pp. 186, 192 (in Russian); WULFF-ALPATOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117, 271. Cf. the recently discovered composition in Kahrié Djami.

¹² LIKHACHEV : *The Historical Significance of Italo-Greek Ikon Painting*, p. 201 (in Russian).



A—ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON. EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY. MOSAIC ; DIAMETER 15.2 CM. (LOUVRE, PARIS)

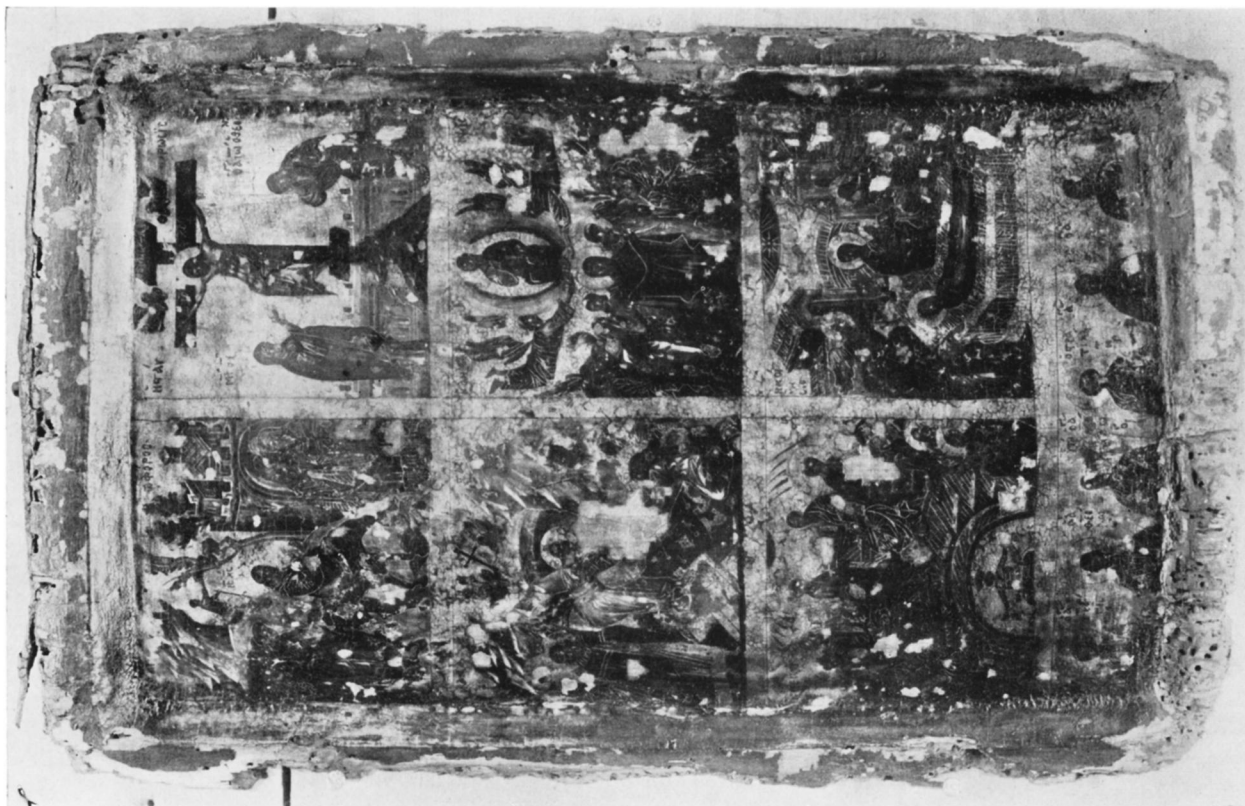


B—THE VIRGIN AND CHILD. FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 34 BY 19 CM. (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW) ; C—ST. THEODORE STRATILATES. EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY. MOSAIC, 9 BY 7 CM. (THE HERMITAGE, LENINGRAD) ; D—THE DEATH OF THE VIRGIN. FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY (THE HERMITAGE, LENINGRAD)

PLATE I. BYZANTINE IKONS OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES



A—THE TWELVE APOSTLES. FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 38 BY 34 CM. (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW)



B—THE SIX FEASTS.—FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 31.5 BY 20.5 CM. (THE HERMITAGE, LENINGRAD)

PLATE II. BYZANTINE IKONS OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

III, A]¹³ in the latter museum. The composition of the first two is distinguished by picturesqueness and they are full of movement. The figures lean toward the centre as though bowed by a gust of wind, while their distribution on different levels lends animation to the grouping. The Moscow ikon is especially remarkable for its clear, light colouring—flame-red, light blue, greenish yellow, pinkish red, blue, violet, dark lilac and light brown—a gay and joyous colour-scheme which bears witness to the fine colour-sense of the artist. The ikon of the Virgin is much more restrained in colour, being built up on a combination of deep lilac, light brown and gold. The depth of expression in the faces of both the Virgin and the Christ, so full of sadness and foreboding, is especially striking. Here also the lights are laid on with a free, full brush. The fine quality of this ikon leaves no doubt of its Constantinopolitan origin. The ikon of the *Annunciation* comes from the same school and is notable for the originality of its composition which has a sense of depth typical of the fourteenth century. Behind the figures of the Angel and the Virgin is a barrier beyond which stands a maidservant clasping a column with both hands. The massive and complicated architectural structures are surmounted by an effective, vivid red velum echoing the red cushion and in beautiful contrast with the green, blue and deep lilac of the garments, the dull greens of the buildings and the light brown throne hatched with gold.

An entirely different style, much dryer in quality, appears in an ikon in the Hermitage representing *Six Feasts*¹⁴ [PLATE II, B]. It repeats the composition of the Florentine mosaic almost identically and is executed in a fine, miniature technique. This same technique was used in painting the ikon in the British Museum¹⁵ which depicts the *Annunciation*, the *Nativity*, the *Baptism* and the *Transfiguration*. Its Egyptian provenance and somewhat coarse execution give us reason to suppose that in this case we have to do with a provincial imitation of metropolitan miniatures.

The ikons of the first half of the fourteenth century form a stylistic group of considerable uniformity distinguished by an accentuated picturesqueness. If analogies with western art were not so dangerous we might describe this style as a Byzantine variant of baroque. The treatment is very soft; there are no hard lines in the faces, the lights are laid on in broad strokes of the brush or in short, full touches.

¹³ This ikon has suffered greatly in its lower part, but the portion remaining intact is in an excellent state of preservation.

¹⁴ SICHEV : *Stariye Godi* [Jan. 1916], p. 9 (in Russian). The ikon has suffered greatly from time. It is a wing of a triptych.

¹⁵ DALTON : *THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE* [1909], XIV, pp. 230-36; *Idem* : *Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, p. 319; AINALOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 79-8 (in Russian); MILLET : *op. cit.*, Index s.v. London, p. 731. The ikon comes from the Monastery of the Virgin near the Natron Lakes in Egypt. The dating by Dalton to the thirteenth century seems to me too early. It was painted, as Ainalov correctly observed, not before the fourteenth century.

This elegant style is permeated by the Hellenistic spirit. Its starting point was not direct observation of nature but certain dynamic motifs and compositional formulæ borrowed from the heritage of antiquity. This close connexion with Hellenism gives to the style of the first half of the fourteenth century a profoundly retrospective quality, both of form and spirit, which is the logical parallel of the humanistic tendencies which marked the finest minds of the Constantinopolitan society of that period. Therefore its origin and development on Constantinopolitan soil was naturally to be expected, for it was here that the subtle neo-Hellenists worked—Georgius Pachymeres, Theodore Metochites, Nicephoras Gregoras and Manuel Philes, author of the elegant *Ἐκφράσεις* composed in imitation of Philostratus.

The Constantinopolitan style of the first half of the fourteenth century sprang from a purely secular spirit. But in the 'thirties of that century a powerful intellectual movement sprang up which threw down a challenge to the humanistic trend. It originated at Mount Athos, and under the name of *Hesychasm* gathered up all the occult teachings of eastern Christianity. It was a summons to quietism, to withdrawal from a sinful world, to pure prayer and a mystical union with the Divine. Under the influence of the asceticism of the Hesychastic movement, a new and more idealistic style arose. Movement, once so strongly emphasized, gives place to a constantly increasing immobility; the picturesque treatment is superseded by a linear style and the faces once more acquire severity and solemnity of expression. This late art of the Palæologi gradually becomes permeated by a spirit of classicistic restraint and academic frigidity.

Among the ikons of the second half of the fourteenth century there are three accurately dated examples which enable us to define with greater precision the time when related works were painted. These are : the Cyprian ikon, showing the *Pantokrator with two Angels, Donors and the Princess Maria*, in the church of Chrysolaniotissa at Nicosia (1356)¹⁶; the ikon of the *Pantokrator* in the Hermitage (1363) [PLATE IV, A],¹⁷ painted by order of the Great Primicerion John and the Great Stratopedarch Alexis, and the reliquary of Thomas Preljubovich, despot of Epirus,

¹⁶ TALBOT RICE : *The Illustrated London News* [Aug. 11, 1934], p. 222.

¹⁷ KONDAKOV : *Portraits of a Russian Princely Family in the Miniatures of the Eleventh Century*, pp. 76-77; *Idem* : *Iconography of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 80, 84 and Pl. 3 (with an incorrect dating to the fifteenth century; both in Russian); MILLET : *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* [1906], pp. 618-619; MURATOV : *op. cit.*, pp. 186-193 (in Russian); SICHEV : *loc. cit.* [Jan.-Feb., 1916], p. 8 (in Russian); DIEHL : *op. cit.*, p. 867. As Millet has proved, there was a fresco with the same inscription as the one on the ikon in the narthex of the monastery of the Pantokrator on Mt. Athos which was consecrated in 1363. As the patrons to whose order the ikon was made, one of whom appears in the lower right-hand corner, were related to the imperial family, there is every reason to connect it with the Constantinople school. Still, it is not impossible that the ikon originated on Mt. Athos which the metropolitan masters often visited.

in the treasury of the cathedral at Cuenca (1367-1384).¹⁸ A comparison of these examples with ikons of the first half of the fourteenth century makes the increased dryness of treatment immediately evident. The forms have become sharp as though embossed and the faces are modelled by means of fine, dry lines diverging fanwise, in places passing over into continuous hatching, instead of by lights laid on with a full brush. This dry, graphic manner of painting, in many ways anticipating the style of the fifteenth century, first began to develop in the third quarter of the fourteenth century as is evidenced by the dated ikons referred to above and also by a fragment of mural painting in the church of Panagia (1341-1373) on the Isle of Khalki, one of the Princes Islands.¹⁹

There can be no doubt that in the second half of the fourteenth century ikons were still being produced which in many respects closely followed the artistic traditions of the period of the early Palæologi. Among these may be mentioned the fine ikon of the *Death of the Virgin* in the Hermitage,²⁰ which is distinguished by the extraordinary freshness of its colouring; the ikon of *Our Lady of Tenderness* with fourteen half-length saints, also in the Hermitage [PLATE III, c],²¹ and which, in respect of execution, is the best example of that type; and an ikon of the *Annunciation* in the Tretyakov Gallery at Moscow [PLATE III, b].²² This latter is remarkable for the admirable balance of its masses. The fantastic architecture frames the light, elegantly drawn figures, the whole forming a closely bound compositional unit permeated by a single rhythm. While it is not impossible that this ikon was executed by a Russian master, nevertheless it is so similar to the Constantinople examples, of which it is, no doubt, an imitation, that it may well be included in the group of purely Greek ikons.

The Constantinopolitan ikons of the late fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth, which illustrate the final stage in the evolution of Byzantine painting, have already broken completely with the picturesque tradition of the time of the Palæologi. The specific ikon-painting style is clearly evident—the style which exercised a decisive influence on

Italo-Greek and Cretan work. The compositions are distinguished by a classicistic repose; the fine, graphic line dominates everywhere; the faces have acquired a marked dryness and austerity. A new method is used in the treatment of the flesh tints—an even flooding of the lights with pale colour which gradually deepens, passing imperceptibly into shadow (the “*plav*” or fusion of the Russian ikon-painters). This method was the final stage in the evolution of the fan-like hatching; the lines, becoming constantly finer and more closely spaced, at last merged completely. In the ikon representing *Gregorius Palamus* (1296-1360), *Archbishop of Thessalonica* [PLATE IV, c],²³ and a famous leader of the Hesychastic movement, a relatively great freedom in the placing of the lines by which the flesh is modelled is observable, thus connecting this ikon with that of the *Pantokrator* painted in 1363 and enabling us to place it in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. But in the monumental ikon of the *Pantokrator* in the Moscow Museum of Fine Arts [PLATE IV, b],²⁴ which cannot be earlier than the end of the fourteenth century, the tremendous increase in the graphic dryness of treatment is evident at the first glance; the lights have completely lost their original character and have been transformed into a veritable cobweb of almost imperceptible, nearly blended lines. The logical conclusion of this process may be studied in certain ikons belonging to the first half of the fifteenth century: a small fine *Panagia with the Trinity* forming part of the Carrand collection in the Bargello at Florence (early fifteenth century) [PLATE IV, d],²⁵ and three ikons preserved in the Hermitage; a *Trinity*, somewhat sombre in colouring (first half of the fifteenth century),²⁶ a *Descent into Hell*, remarkable for the severity of its forms and the rare beauty of its drawing (second quarter of the fifteenth century),²⁷ and a *Birth of St. John the Baptist*, the gleaming colours of which differ little in force and intensity from the palette of the

¹⁸ As Gregorius Palamus was canonized by the Constantinopolitan Council in 1368, this date serves as a *terminus post quem* for the origin of the ikon. It was probably painted in the 'seventies.

¹⁹ From the Ostroukhov collection. For the treatment of the face and hands, cf. the *Pantokrator* dated 1363 in the Hermitage.

²⁰ For the relationship between Greek and Russian ikon-painting and Italian painting of the early Renaissance, see KONDAKOV: *The Iconography of the Virgin*, p. 121 (in Russian). Cf. the ikon of the *Trinity* in the Hermitage and Cod. Paris Gr. 1242, fol. 123 (1371-1375).

²¹ PUNIN: *The Russian Ikon*, I [1914], pp. 7, 31 and Pl. (in Russian); AINALOV: *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91 (in Russian); DIEHL: *op. cit.*, p. 867. It was Ainalov who first connected this ikon with the Constantinople school, but his dating to the reign of John Cantacuzenus seems to me too early.

²² LIKHACHEV: *Materials for the History of Russian Ikon Painting*, No. 108; MURATOV: *op. cit.*, p. 77 (both in Russian); DIEHL: *op. cit.*, p. 867; SCHWEINFURTH: *Geschichte der russischen Malerei im Mittelalter*, p. 419. Schweinfurth attributes the ikon to the Cretan school of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but this is incompatible with its style which has nothing in common with the Cretan method of painting. The ikon unquestionably belongs to the Constantinople school and is one of its best works. For the type of Eve, cf. Anna in *Pantanassa*; for that of the Baptist, the figure standing behind Christ in the *Raising of Lazarus*, in the same place.

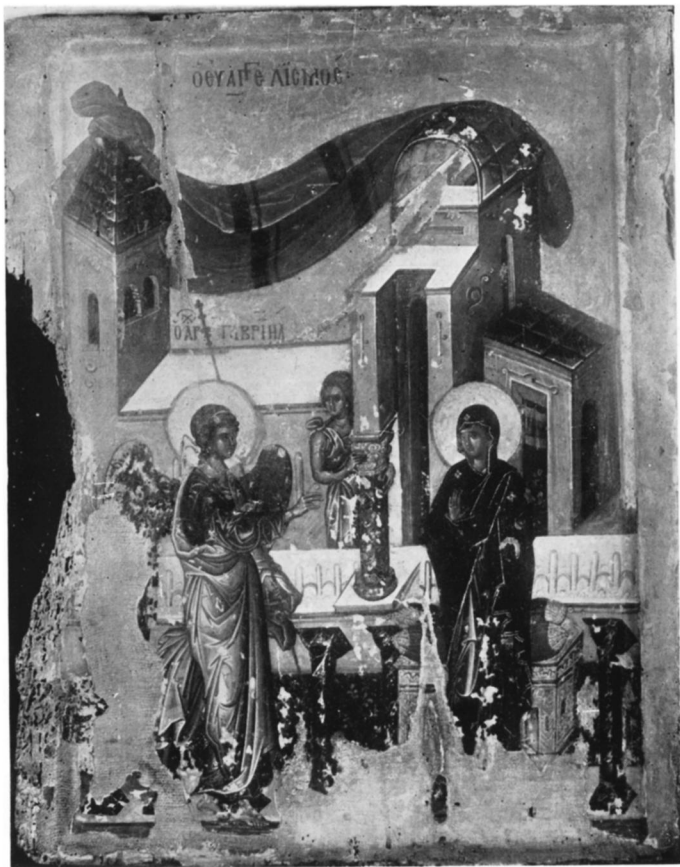
¹⁸ OSTROGORSKY and SCHWEINFURTH: *Seminarium Kondakovianum* [1931], IV, pp. 165-172.

¹⁹ Cf. ZIDKOV: *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* [1928], pp. 521-528.

²⁰ For the type of Christ cf. the *Pantokrator* of 1363 in the Hermitage. The heads, painted with great freedom, go back to the pictorial traditions of the first half of the fourteenth century. The most probable time for the execution of the ikon is the third quarter of the fourteenth century.

²¹ KONDAKOV: *The Iconography of the Virgin*, II, p. 264 (in Russian); WULFF-ALPATOV, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-22, 272-73. Kondakov attributes this ikon to the Italo-Cretan school, but its style is incompatible with this and it is no doubt connected with Constantinople.

²² ALPATOV: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* [1925], pp. 347-457; WULFF-ALPATOV: *op. cit.*, pp. 118-120, 271-272; BRÉHIER: *L'art byzantin chez les slaves*. Second series dedicated to the memory of Théodore Uspensky, Part I [1932], pp. 162-3, Fig. 53. For the figures of the angel and the Virgin, and the type of architecture, cf. the frescoes of the *Peribleptos* and *Pantanassa* at Mistra (the *Annunciation*).



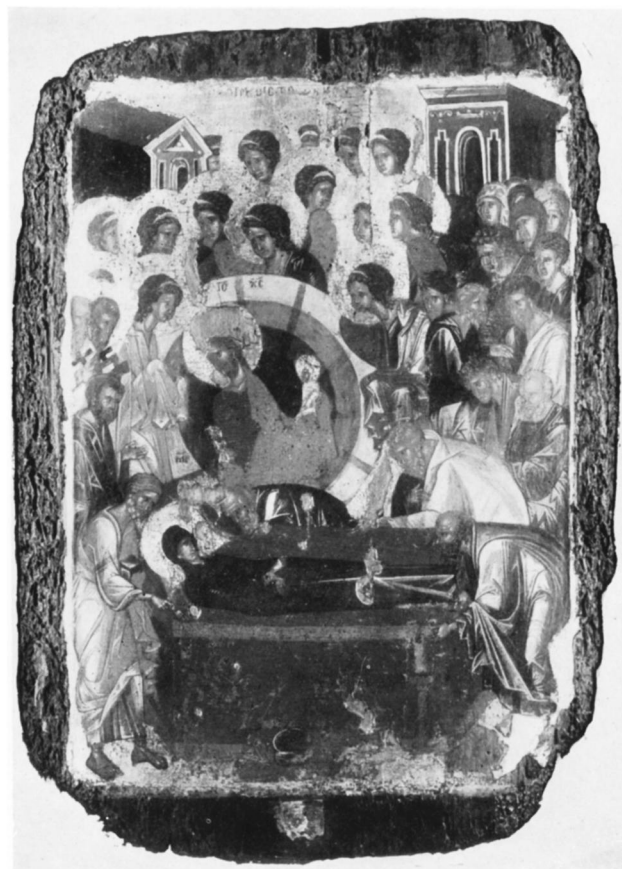
A—THE ANNUNCIATION. FIRST HALF OF FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 55 BY 43 CM. (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW)



B—THE ANNUNCIATION. SECOND HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 43 BY 34.5 CM. (THE TRETYAKOV GALLERY, MOSCOW)

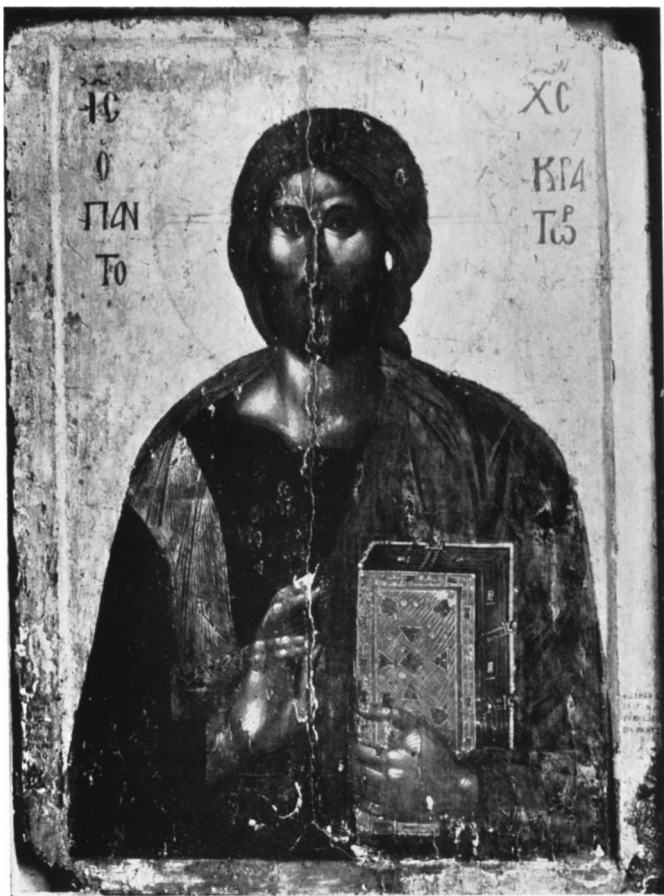


C—OUR LADY OF TENDERNESS. SECOND HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 33 BY 27 CM. (THE HERMITAGE, LENINGRAD)

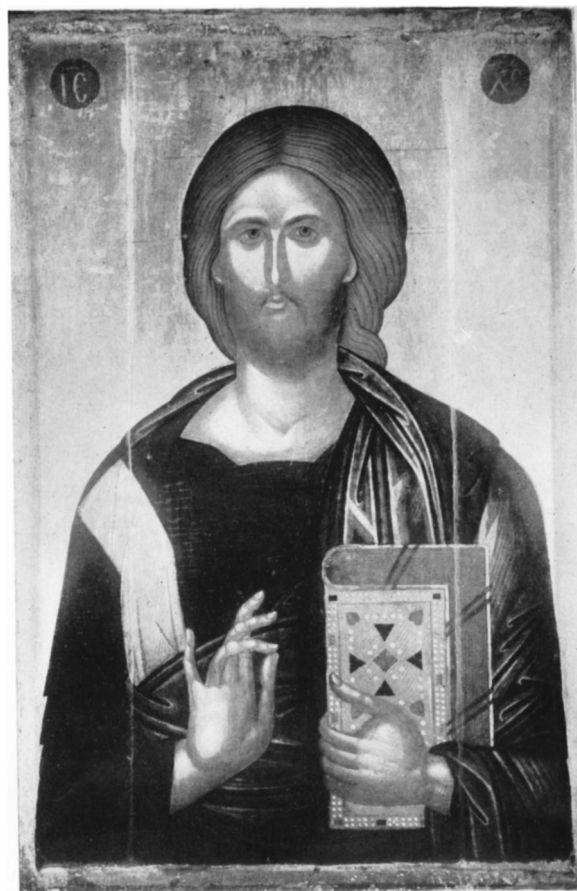


D—THE DEATH OF THE VIRGIN. FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 45 BY 34 CM. (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW)

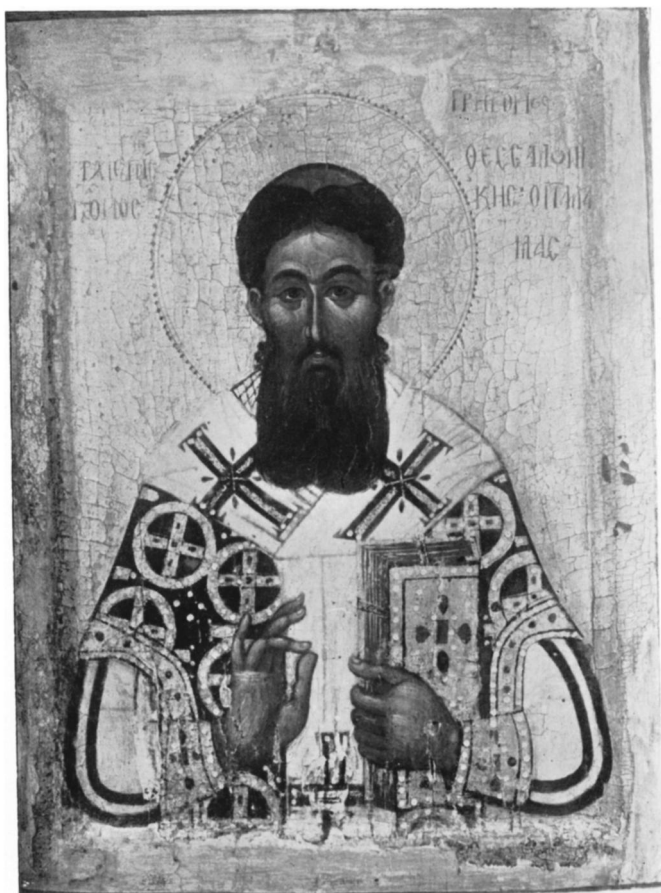
PLATE III. BYZANTINE IKONS OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES



A—THE PANTOKRATOR. ABOUT 1363. PANEL, 106 BY 79 CM. (THE HERMITAGE, LENINGRAD)



B—THE PANTOKRATOR. END OF THE FOURTEENTH OR THE BEGINNING OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL, 124 BY 80 CM. (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW)



C—GREGORIUS PALAMUS, ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONICA. ABOUT 1370-80. PANEL, 34 BY 26 CM. (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW)



D—THE PANAGIA WITH THE TRINITY. EARLY FIFTEENTH CENTURY. PANEL; DIAMETER, 12.7 CM. (THE CARRAND COLLECTION, THE BARGELLO, FLORENCE)

PLATE IV. BYZANTINE IKONS OF THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

Netherlandish masters (middle of the fifteenth century).²⁸

The Constantinople ikons of the first half of the fifteenth century clearly show to what a degree the linear style had become petrified during the last stage in the development of metropolitan painting.

²⁸ PUNIN: *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 11, 28-29 and Pl. (in Russian); AINALOV: *op. cit.*, pp. 167-168 (in Russian); DIEHL: *op. cit.*, p. 867. The Italian influence which Ainalov thought he recognized is in fact quite absent from this ikon. For individual details of the composition, cf. the Serbian fresco at Petch (*Birth of the Virgin*), the fresco at Peribleptos (*Birth of the Virgin*), and especially the ikon (*Birth of the Virgin*) in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum at Munich. For the treatment of the face of Zachariah, cf. the head of the High Priest in the *Suitors of Mary in Prayer* at Peribleptos.

In the period of the Palæologi a large number of ikons was made in the Christian East in this dry, graphic style stamped with academic frigidity. Most of these are now concealed by century-old layers of dust and numerous repaints. It was this metropolitan style of the time of the Palæologi which was imported into Italy, where it became the stylistic basis of the Italo-Greek ikons actually executed on Italian soil, but too often arbitrarily confounded by investigators either with the genuine Greek or with the Cretan ikons. This style spread to Crete later than to Italy and there gradually degenerated into eclecticism and complete decadence.

A RE-DISCOVERED PICTURE BY ANDREA CORDELIAGHI

BY IRENE KUNZE

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE QUESTION OF THE IDENTITY OF ANDREA PREVITALI AND ANDREA CORDELIAGHI.



PICTURE of the *Madonna and Child* bearing the inscription ANDREAS . CORDELLE . AGI . P., [PLATE II, A], which was discovered in a private collection at Berlin some time ago, affords us an opportunity of opening once again the much discussed question of the possible identity of Bellini's pupil, Andrea Cordelle Aghi (Cordeliaghi, Cordella) with the Bergamo artist known as Andrea Previtali who, in his early Venetian period, called himself Andreas Bergomensis. While Crowe and Cavalcaselle¹ regard the pictures which bear the name of Cordeliaghi as early works by Previtali, Morelli declares² that, on stylistic, as well as on philological grounds connected with the name Cordeliaghi, the two artists cannot be one and the same person. But Morelli's statement that the name Cordelle Agi (instead of Aghi), meaning needle and thread—obviously a nickname given to the painter because one of his ancestors was a huckster who sold needles and cotton—could only apply to a Venetian and not to a native of Bergamo, it being a Venetian form of speech, was contradicted by Dr. G. Ludwig,³ whose investigations in the archives of Venice established the fact that the only person of the name of Cordeliaghi mentioned in these documents came from Brembate Superiore, a place quite near Bergamo. Although Morelli's argument has thus been refuted, on the other hand the proof of the identity of the two artists brought forward by Crowe and Cavalcaselle cannot be upheld either. The latter thought that a mark which appears near the name "Andreas Privitalus" on the St. John altarpiece of 1515 in S. Spirito at Bergamo, could also be discerned on a picture of 1504 bearing the name of Andrea



Cordeliaghi, formerly in the Eastlake collection and now in the National Gallery (No. 1409) [PLATE I, A]. But here the marks at the end of the inscription are quite different and were deciphered by Waagen⁴ as the number 24, being the age of the artist. On the other hand, an absolutely identical mark is found on two pictures signed by "Andreas Bergomensis"—a mark observed neither by Crowe and Cavalcaselle nor by their opponent Morelli: one is a *Madonna* of 1510 in the Dresden Gallery, formerly in the Manfrini Gallery at Venice [PLATE I, D]; the other, also a picture of the *Madonna*, has been known hitherto only in an engraving which was reproduced in connexion with Dr. Ludwig's essay. This mark *does* therefore provide us with a proof, but only that the pictures by "Andreas Bergomensis" were painted by Previtali while, in respect of the works signed "Cordelle Agi," we must fall back on stylistic comparison.

If we adopt the view, almost universally held since Dr. Ludwig's investigations, that the three appellations cover one and the same artistic personality, we must assume that Andrea, who was born at Bergamo about 1480, left his family, the Previtali, about 1500 to go to Venice, and that he there called himself both Andreas Bergomensis and Andreas Cordelle Agi, generally in connexion with his association as pupil with Giovanni Bellini. At the end of 1510 he must have returned home to Bergamo where he called himself by his family name Previtali and soon freed himself from Bellini's influence in order to adopt the artistic views of his Lombard contemporaries, and finally to follow Lorenzo Lotto who had been settled at Bergamo since 1515. According to Tassi,⁵ he died at Bergamo in 1528.

His earliest dated picture, a *Madonna and Child with a Donor* in the Museo Civico at Padua [PLATE II, c] bears the date 1502 and the name "Andreas Bergomensis"; his latest work with this appella-

¹ *Geschichte der italienischen Malerei* [1873], V, p. 290.

² LERMOLIEFF (i.e. Morelli): *Die Galerien zu München und Dresden* [1891], p. 308.

³ *Jahrbuch der Preuss. Kunstsammlungen* [1903], XXIV, p. 57.

⁴ *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* [1854-57], II, p. 265.

⁵ *Vite de' Pittori . . . Bergamaschi* [1793], I, p. 43.